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Anti-Red Group 'Lost' In State Dept. Shuffle

'Reprisals' Draw Fire In Congress

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In apparent reprisal for Congressional criticism of its security program, the State Department this week quietly transferred its entire six-man team of hardline anti-Communists from work in the personnel security field.

The move is almost certain to inflame the simmering war on the "security risks" issue between the State Department and lawmakers of both parties on Capitol Hill.

REVEALING MOVE

Informed of the latest development today, U. S. Rep. John M. Ashbrook (R.-Ohio), declared:

"If ever there was a stupid—and at the same time deeply revealing—move at this particular juncture in its history, it's State's decision to banish six more of its most accomplished anti-Communist career men. With Otto Otepka, that makes seven.

Rep. Ashbrook, a member of

the House UN-American Activities Committee has introduced **OPYRGHT** for a probe of the State Dept.

"This transfer," he said, "shows an arrogance toward the opinions of the Congress and our previous legislative enactments dealing with internal security.

CRITICIZES POLICY

"Added to its policy of appeasing Communism, the transfer of these six security officers not only illustrates the department's true posture on the Red issue, but its almost uncanny deviousness in fending off any influences from Congress which might change that posture.

"There has been a constant playing down of the internal security threat during the past three years. Communist subversion efforts have continued strong and unfortunately our guard has been lowered and lowered and lowered."

The order transferring the six anti-Communists was effective on Monday. It was seemingly aimed at plugging the "leaks" from State which have found their way recently to the Hill.

LAST VESTIGES

The order removes the last vestiges of the tough anti-Red screening board which the late Scott McLeod installed in 1953 as administrator of the State Department's Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs.

Mr. McLeod's chief lieutenant, Mr. Otepka, already had been squeezed out as a result of adverse testimony about the department's security program before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

All of the six affected by the transfer are World War II veterans, two—like McLeod himself—were once FBI agents.

They include Raymond Loughton, a lawyer and former deputy director of security for the Defense Dept.; Harry Hite, also a lawyer and highly skilled evaluator of investigators' reports; and Francis Gardner, former FBI agent.

NONE WILL COMMENT

Also Edwin Burkhardt, whose investigative talents are almost as legendary as those of the fictional James Bond; John R. Norpel, former FBI agent; and Howard Shee, another investigator.

Described by their friends as "incensed" over the unexpected shuffle, none of the six would comment on the matter yesterday.

But it was learned that they spent the first two days of their assignment in a new office of the big building in Foggy Bottom reading newspapers and brochures on foreign countries and waiting for someone to tell them what to do. They are still waiting.

The department's official version of the transfer is that "the men are on an important new mission."

ABRASIVE EFFECT

But there's not the slightest doubt of the abrasive effect the transfer will have on the growing list of critics of the State Department in the Senate and House of Representatives. Two bills calling for an investigation of State recently have been introduced on Capitol Hill.

"Both those bills probably will be yanked out of the hopper in a hurry," said one Congressional aide, when informed of the veteran security sextet's sudden switch to positions of ineffectuality.

"In one fell swoop State has tipped its mitt," he continued. "It has shown how it really feels about the Reds, pinkos and sex deviates in its midst by throwing away the lock and key."

The six transferred security officers were, in effect, the "house dicks" of the department. They knew where all the bodies were buried among the 24,000 employees.

Of these, about 7,000 are U.S. citizens in Washington, about 7,000 are U.S. citizens abroad and about 10,000 are foreigners working in 274 overseas consular posts and legations and 108 embassies.

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PRIME ISSUE SEEN
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in the McLeod-Otepka tradition made them extremely useful potential witnesses before Congressional committees, but—as has now been decreed apparently in Foggy Bottom—extremely dangerous, in fact, too dangerous, for the bigwigs of their own agency.

It's this palpable and long-

sustained impulse of State to "hide the facts about itself" from Congress which bids, fair—in the opinion of veteran Capitol Hill hands—to make the conduct and principal figures of the department a prime issue in the upcoming Presidential campaign.

It was another Republican Congressman, U.S. Rep. Henry

C. Schadeberg of Wisconsin, who introduced the other bill calling for a top-to-bottom investigation of State.

But it was a Democrat, Rep. Michael A. Feighan of Ohio, who locked horns with the executive branch on the issue of Soviet Secret Police defector, Lt. Col. Michael Goleniewski.

WON PROMISE

Shocked by what Col. Goleniewski told him and two aides about spies and subversives on U.S. Government payrolls, Rep. Feighan won from Central Intelligence Agency Director John A. McCone a promise that the defector could make a previously-thwarted appearance before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

It was scheduled for last week, it was learned yesterday, but put off because of the illness of Col. Goleniewski's wife.

So the war between State and the Hill is developing a broad, bipartisan base.

A LONG LIST

Involved is an eight-year-old list of some 800 potential security risks on State's payrolls. The list was prepared under Scott McLeod's direction.

Some contend that it has been whittled down to 175 pro-Reds, pinks, alcoholics, sex deviates and weak sisters, but Mr. Otepka—who charged his phone was "bugged" by State employees when he was chief evaluator of security cases—reportedly believes that the true number of "vulnerables" may be closer to the 800 figure.

Mr. Otepka himself, a Navy veteran and a lawyer, has been the subject of some of the most quicksilverish testimony by State Dept. employees ever heard by the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

Three of State's witnesses

were obliged to write "clarifying" letters after giving false testimony about their spying on Mr. Otepka.

Two have since been fired.

Mr. Otepka was booted out of his security job—apparently for telling the Senators that his department's security program was a shambles—but he has been kept on the agency's payroll "pending a review of his case" by Secretary of State Rusk.

More and more the able and smooth-talking Mr. Rusk, according to soundings taken by this reporter, is working himself into the gun-sights of exasperated legislators of both major parties, except those who are very, very patient or very, very pink.

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